What is claimed is:

1. A system for trading commodities and the like comprising:

a computer;

a communications link between said computer and the Internet;

a database, accessible by said computer, containing a plurality of user

5 files wherein each of said plurality of user files corresponds to a specified user

of the system and further containing exchange permissions corresponding to

exchanges to which the specified user may access;

a database, accessible by said computer, containing a plurality of

indications wherein each of said plurality of indications contains information

10 corresponding to open bids or offers for commodities and said indications are

organized according to the commodities to which they correspond;

al least one computerized exchange for transacting specified

commodities executing on said computer accessible by selected users having

proper exchange permissions for each exchange;

15 a presentation of indications transmitted from said computer to a user

of the system over said communications link,

software executing on said computer for querying said user database

to retrieve exchange permissions from a user file corresponding to the user,

retrieving indications from said indication database corresponding to the

20 predetermined commodities within the exchanges to which the user has been

determined to have access, generating a presentation of said retrieved

indications, and transmitting said presentation to the user over said

communications link.

2. The system of claim 1 wherein said specified commodities associated

with an exchange are viewed exclusively by users having exchange

permissions corresponding to the exchange.

3. The system of claim 2 further comprising commodity-sharing privileges

granted between at least two exchanges permitting at least one of the

exchanges access to at least one commodity associated with the exchanges.

4.   The system of claim 1 wherein each of said plurality of user files further contains a plurality of transaction parameters corresponding to one or more indications associated with said user file, said transaction parameters governing the presentation and acceptance of indications associated

5   therewith and the system further comprising software executing on said computer for querying user files in said user database corresponding to each of said retrieved indications to determine transaction parameters associated with each of said retrieved indications, and generating said presentation of said retrieved indications in accordance with said determined transaction

10   parameters.

5.   The system of claim 4 wherein said transaction parameters enable a submitter of an indication to remain anonymous to specific users of the system that have been predetermined by the submitter.

6.   The system of claim 4 wherein said transaction parameters enable a submitter of an indication to reveal contact information to specific users of the system that have been predetermined by the submitter.

7.   The system of claim 4 wherein said transaction parameters permit a submitter of an indication to grant specific users preferred status over other users of the system with respect to actions concerning indications submitted by the submitter.

8.   The system of claim 1 further comprising:
       a request to register submitted by the user to said computer over said communications link;
       software executing on said computer for transmitting a registration form

5   to the user over said communications link in response to said request.
       a completed registration from submitted by the user to said computer over said communications link; and,
       software executing on said computer for receiving said completed registration form, creating a user file based on said completed registration

10   form, and storing said user file in said user database.

9.   The system of claim 8 wherein said transaction parameters are determined by the user and submitted to the computer by the user within said completed registration form and further comprising software executing on said computer for retrieving transaction parameters submitted within said

5   completed registration form and storing said transaction parameters in said user file corresponding to the user.

10.   The system of claim 1 further comprising;

a completed indication submission form submitted by the user to said computer over said communications link; and,

software executing on said computer for transmitting an indication submission form to the user over said communications link, receiving said completed indication submission form submitted by the user, creating a new indication based on said completed indication submission form, associating

5   said new indication with a user file corresponding to said user, and storing said new indication in said indication database.

11.   The system of claim 10 wherein said transaction parameters are determined by the user and submitted to the computer by the user within said completed indication submission form and further comprising software executing on said computer for retrieving transaction parameters submitted

5   within said completed indication submission form and storing said transaction parameters in a user file corresponding to the user.

12.   The system of claim 1 further comprising software executing on said computer for operating and maintaining an interactive website to facilitate interaction between the user and said computer.

13.   A system for trading commodities and the like comprising:

a computer;

a communications link between said computer and the Internet;

a database, accessible by said computer, containing a plurality of user

5   files wherein each of said plurality of user files contains a plurality of transaction parameters corresponding to one or more indications associated

with said user file, said transaction parameters governing the presentation and acceptance of indications associated therewith;

a database, accessible by said computer, containing a plurality of indications wherein each of said plurality of indications contains information corresponding to open bids or offers for commodities;

an indication selection submitted by a user over said communications link; and,

software executing on said computer for receiving said indication selection, retrieving an indication corresponding to said indication selection from said indication database, querying a user file in said user database corresponding to said indication to determine transaction parameters associated with said indication, and presenting said indication to the user in accordance with said determined transaction parameters over said communications link.

14. The system of claim 13 wherein said transaction parameters enable a submitter of an indication to remain anonymous to specific users of the system that have been predetermined by the submitter.

15. The system of claim 13 wherein said transaction parameters enable a submitter of an indication to reveal contact information to specific users of the system that have been predetermined by the submitter.

16. The system of claim 13 wherein said transaction parameters permit a submitter of an indication to grant specific users preferred status over other users of the system with respect to actions concerning indications submitted by the submitter.

17. The system of claim 13 wherein said transaction parameters enable a submitter of an indication to submit an indication on behalf of and under the name of another user of the system when the other user has previously designated the submitter as having permission to perform such action.

18. The system of claim 13 further comprising;

a completed indication submission form submitted by the user to said computer over said communications link; and,

software executing on said computer for transmitting an indication submission form to the user over said communications link, receiving said completed indication submission form submitted by the user, creating a new indication based on said completed indication submission form, associating

5 said new indication with a user file corresponding to said user, and storing said new indication in said indication database.

19. The system of claim 18 wherein said transaction parameters are determined by the user and submitted to the computer by the user within said completed indication submission form and further comprising software executing on said computer for retrieving transaction parameters submitted

5 within said completed indication submission form and storing said transaction parameters in a user file corresponding to the user.

20. The system of claim 13 further comprising:

a request to register submitted by the user to said computer over said communications link;

software executing on said computer for transmitting a registration form

5 to the user over said communications link in response to said request.

a completed registration from submitted by the user to said computer over said communications link; and,

software executing on said computer for receiving said completed registration form, creating a user file based on said completed registration

10 form, and storing said user file in said user database.

21. The system of claim 20 wherein said transaction parameters are determined by the user and submitted to the computer by the user within said completed registration form and further comprising software executing on said computer for retrieving transaction parameters submitted within said

5 completed registration form and storing said transaction parameters in said user file corresponding to the user.

22.   The system of claim 13 wherein said indication selection constitutes an acceptance of the selected indication by the user and further comprising software executing on said computer for automatically consummating a transaction between the user and a submitter of said indication upon

5   submission of said indication selection to the computer.

23.   The system of claim 22 further comprising software executing on said computer for retrieving information from said indication database corresponding to said selection necessary to consummate said acceptance of said transaction.

24.   The system of claim 13 wherein said indication selection constitutes an acceptance of a non-firm indication chosen by the user from said plurality of bids and offers.

25.   The system of claim 24 wherein said transaction parameters include contact information and further comprising software executing on said computer for retrieving said contact information corresponding to said indication selection from said user database and transmitting said retrieved contact information to the user over said communications link, wherein said contact information provides the user with the ability to communicate with the submitter of the selected indication.

26.   The system of claim 25 further comprising a communication between the user and the original submitter to finalize said acceptance.

27.   The system of claim 26 wherein said communication involves a negotiation between the user and the original submitter regarding the selected indication.

28.   The system of claim 27 further comprising software executing on said computer for providing an interactive communication environment simultaneously accessible by both the user and the submitter over said communication link wherein said communication occurs in said environment.

29.   The system of claim 13 further comprising software executing on said computer for operating and maintaining an interactive website to facilitate interaction between the user and said computer.

30.   The system of claim 13 further comprising software executing on said computer for tracking actions performed by the user on said system and storing said tracked actions in a user file corresponding to the user in said user database.

31.   The system of claim 30 further comprising:

a trading history request submitted by the user to said computer over said communications link

software executing on said computer querying said user database to retrieve said tracked action from a user file corresponding to said user, compiling a trading history based on said tracked actions, and transmitting said trading history to said user over said communications link.

32.   The system of claim 13 wherein each of said plurality of user files in said user database contain authentication data unique to a user associated therewith and further comprising:

authentication data submitted by the user to said computer over said

5   communications link; and,

software executing on said computer for querying said user database to verify said submitted authentication data.

33.   A system for trading commodities and the like comprising:

a computer;

a communications link between said computer and the Internet;

a database, accessible by said computer, containing a plurality of user

5   files wherein each of said plurality of user files contains transaction parameters corresponding to one or more indications associated with said user file, said transaction parameters governing the presentation and acceptance of indications associated therewith;

a database, accessible by said computer, containing a plurality of
10   indications wherein each of said plurality of indications contains information
corresponding to open bids or offers for commodities;

a presentation of said plurality of indications transmitted from said
computer to the user over said communications link,

software executing on said computer for retrieving said plurality of
indications from said indication database, querying user files in said user
database corresponding to each of said plurality of indications to determine
transaction parameters associated with each of said plurality of indications,
generating a presentation of said plurality of indications in accordance with
said determined transaction parameters, and transmitting said presentation to
the user over said communications link.

34.   The system of claim 33 wherein said transaction parameters enable a
submitter of an indication to remain anonymous to specific users of the
system that have been predetermined by the submitter.

35.   The system of claim 33 wherein said transaction parameters permit a
submitter of an indication to grant specific users preferred status over other
users of the system with respect to actions concerning indications submitted
by the submitter.

36.   The system of claim 33 further comprising:
a formatting selection submitted to said computer by the user over said
communications link; and,

software executing on said computer for transmitting a plurality of
formatting options to the user over said communications link, receiving said
formatting selection submitted by the user, and formatting said presentation
according to said formatting selection prior to transmitting said presentation to
the user.

37.   The system of claim 34 further comprising:
a sorting selection submitted to said computer by the user over said
communications link; and,

software executing on said computer for transmitting a plurality of sorting options to the user over said communications link, receiving said sorting selection submitted by the user, and sorting said presentation according to said submitted sorting selection prior to transmitting said presentation to the user.

38.   The system of claim 33 further comprising:

a content selection submitted to said computer by the user over said communications link; and,

software executing on said computer for transmitting a plurality of content options to the user over said communications link, receiving said content selection submitted by the user, retrieving indications from said indications database corresponding to said submitted content selection, and transmitting said retrieved indications to the user over said communications link.

39.   A method for trading commodities and the like comprising:

receiving an indication selection chosen by a user from a selectable presentation of indications over said communications link;

retrieving an indication corresponding to said indication selection from 5   a database containing a plurality of indications wherein each of said plurality of indications contains information corresponding to open bids or offers for commodities;

retrieving transaction parameters corresponding to said indication selection from a database containing a plurality of user files wherein each of 10   said plurality of user files contains a plurality of transaction parameters corresponding to one or more indications associated with said user file; and,

completing a transaction between the user and a submitter of said indication in accordance with said determined transaction parameters over said communications link.

40.   The method of claim 39 wherein said step of completing a transaction further comprises the steps of:

retrieving contact information corresponding to said indication selection from said user database wherein said transaction parameters include contact information provided by the submitter; and

transmitting said retrieved contact information to the user over said communications link, wherein said contact information provides the user with the ability to communicate with the submitter of the selected indication.

41.   The method of claim 39 wherein said transaction parameters enable a submitter of an indication to remain anonymous to specific users of the system that have been predetermined by the submitter.

42.   The method of claim 39 wherein said transaction parameters enable a submitter of an indication to reveal contact information to specific users of the system that have been predetermined by the submitter.

43.   The system of claim 39 wherein said transaction parameters permit a submitter of an indication to grant specific users preferred status over other users of the system with respect to actions concerning indications submitted by the submitter.